

# MARYLAND BIRDLIFE

*Bulletin of the Maryland Ornithological Society*

*2101 Bolton Street, Baltimore 17, Maryland*



	VOL. <b>5</b>	<b>MARCH APRIL</b> 1949	NO. <b>2</b>	
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# MARYLAND BIRDLIFE

Volume V

March - April, 1949

Number 2

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<p><u>MARYLAND BIRDLIFE</u> published bi-monthly except July-August by MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY 2101 Bolton Street Baltimore 17, Maryland</p>	<p>Events of March &amp; April are reported in the May-June issue, for which the closing date is May 1, and the publication date normally June 1. Send material to Editor C. S. Robbins, Patuxent Research Refuge, Laurel, Md.</p>
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# SPECIAL ARTICLES

## SONG SPARROW NESTING

This is a report of one season's work with one of the bird species in the area near Lake Roland in which the club made a breeding-bird census in 1946 and 1947 (1,2). The chief purpose of this report is to point out some of the interesting phases of the life history of one of the species that can be investigated in this study area. The field notes were compiled largely by one person and were only incidental to the main work in hand, viz.: spotting birds on a map as rapidly as possible in order to cover the area for a breeding-bird census. One or more persons banding and studying the life history of the song sparrow or one of the two or three other abundant species in the area could uncover many interesting facts. For many stimulating suggestions as to problems that may be investigated see Joseph J. Hickey's Guide to bird watching (4).

Our census area is very attractive to song sparrows (3). In 1947, 21 pairs were found in the 19.2 acre tract; this is the equivalent of 109 pairs per 100 acres. Mrs. Margaret Morse Nice (5) in her classic seven year study of song sparrows in a 40-acre tract in Columbus, Ohio, found from 62.5 to 130 pairs per 100 acres. Mrs. Nice worked with color-banded birds and was able to recognize the songs of individual males. She found territories ranging from one-half to one and one-half acres. Subsequent nests of the same pair were placed 9 to 50 meters from the preceeding nest. Since the limits of territories cannot be accurately determined unless birds are color banded and a great deal of field work carried out, the sizes of the territories in our tract cannot be compared with these Mrs. Nice obtained. She found that if a male lost his mate after the nesting season was well started, he almost never obtained a new one. Hence, by June there were two to ten unmated males singing in the 40-acre tract. Unfortunately, the standard spot-mapping method of determining bird populations, which we used, does not distinguish unmated from mated males.

In Columbus some song sparrows are winter residents, some are permanent residents, and others are transients. Mrs. Nice found that if the temperature rose above normal in January or February, permanent resident birds began to sing and stake out their territories. "Singing and territory activity are well established the fourth week in January at a mean temperature of 6° C. (43°F.)" (5). Cold windy days usually caused temporary cessation of singing.

If the temperature in Columbus rose 17° to 28°F. above normal in late February, summer resident song sparrows began to arrive. Even

if the temperature remained normal, the main wave of migration began by March 19 or 20. Since the mean temperature in Baltimore was at or below normal from February 19 to March 11, 1947, it is probable that virtually no summer resident song sparrows appeared before March 12.

Males migrate before the females, and sing on the chosen territories. Transients follow and summer resident females arrive last. Although most of the males, transients, and summer resident females arrive in the main migration wave in March, at least one female did not arrive in Columbus until April 22 (5).

Mrs. Nice (5) found that maximum singing occurs in March before many females arrive. An individual male almost ceases his singing as soon as he obtains a mate.

Young birds frequently have a warbling song. "In late February a young bird may warble in low situations on his territory, but when he sits high in a tree proclaiming ownership, his songs are adult in form. The young transient males that pass through in March warble freely, but I have never heard a young summer resident male warble in the spring on Interpont; upon the arrival at the nesting grounds the bird reacts as an adult. With the young residents the warble is given up in late February and never reappears, all of the late summer and fall warbling coming from young birds." (5).

On March 31 I saw two song sparrows on the grass-covered ground six inches apart. One sang very softly. I thought at the time that they were mates, but since they were not banded, I have no proof. They may have been locating a nest site. Mrs. Nice (6) describes this activity as follows: "The Song Sparrow pair goes about together searching for nest sites, twitching their wings and giving soft notes."

On March 31, April 7, and June 8, 1947, I listed the height at which some of the song sparrows on our census area sang. On objects varying from zero to 22 feet in height, the birds perched from zero to 20 feet up. Nine of the 12 records were of birds singing at heights of nine feet or lower. One time a bird sang at heights varying from five to nine feet, although the sapling in which it was perched was 15 feet tall.

The beginning of egg laying follows warm periods, Mrs. Nice having found the first song sparrow egg between April 10 and 23 in different years. She established April 25 as the normal date for the beginning of general egg laying in Columbus. Young left her latest nest the first week in September. Mrs. Nice found that in nine-tenths of the first attempts to nest, the nest was placed on the ground, whereas the nest was on the ground in only two-thirds of the second attempts and only one-third of the third attempts. The first clutch of eggs almost always numbered four or five.

Probably no first nests were found on our census area. All of those found were located above the ground. The earliest nest was one which had five eggs on May 26, and on June 2 had young about six days old. This was the only nest which had five eggs. Since only

late nests were found, the average clutch size given in the table below is abnormally low. Mrs. Nice found 4.05 eggs to be the average clutch size of nests found in six seasons (1930-35). But late nests, which have a high proportion of three egg sets, were recorded only in 1930. Her average clutch size in 1930 was 3.9 eggs. She believes that cowbirds removed more song sparrow eggs in 1930 than she corrected for, and hence that the figure 3.9 is slightly low. Mrs. Nice's average for 1930 includes three eggs in two nests which were destroyed before the clutch was complete, and the six-year figure (total 854 eggs in 211 nests) includes seven eggs in five nests which were similarly destroyed. The total also includes one nest which was deserted before a single song sparrow egg was laid.

Table 1. Summary of 1947 Song Sparrow Nests

Number of nests found	13
Number of nests for which complete clutch was known	10
Clutch size (extremes)	3 to 5
Average clutch (of 10 nests)	3.6
Egg dates	May 15 to August 5
Height of nests	2 to 5½ ft.

The nests were located as follows, the number of nests so located being given in parentheses: dead or nearly dead black locust saplings--nests concealed by vines or tall, erect weeds (5); smooth sumac (1); Japanese barberry (1); Japanese honeysuckle-covered hickory stub (1); spice bush (1); Virginia pine sapling (1); mulberry sapling (1); rose tangle (1).

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  2. —. (Nov., 1947):218-219.
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  4. Hickey, Joseph J. A guide to bird watching. N.Y., Oxford Univ. (1943) 262p.
  5. Nice, Margaret Morse. Studies in the life history of the song sparrow. I. Linnaean society of New York. Trans. 4(1937):247p.
  6. —. Studies in the life history of the song sparrow. II. Linnaean society of New York. Trans. 6(1943)329p.
- Eleanor Cooley Robbins

#### FOOD FOR BIRDS BY THE ACRE

Two of our teen-age members, James Ramsay and Don Pickering, wrote to the Cooperative Corn Growers Association last spring and secured seed corn. They then secured the use of a tract of land from the farm manager at McDonogh and planted and cultivated a fine stand of hybrid corn. Part of this two-acre tract will be left standing in the field to provide winter food and shelter for grain-eating species such as the bob-white, of which we have a good population. The rest will be harvested to feed the birds in the J. Rulon Miller Wildlife area. This project was conceived and executed entirely by the boys involved.



## BIRDS OF BALTIMORE CITY PARKS: I - WYMAN'S

The field trip program of the Maryland Ornithological Society is very complete both as to season and habitat--in fact so complete that by virtue of it many of us are prone to overlook a source of most interesting field work that is accessible every day of the year. I refer to the parks of the city of Baltimore.

Distributed throughout the city are 14 parks of varying size. Each of these offers an excellent opportunity for year-round study. While the results often are not spectacular and the numbers involved are not large, most of these parks duplicate in some degree all the interesting phases of the various migrations of land birds observable under the best of conditions anywhere in this vicinity. Many of us are not able to participate in the census and field work of the Society, and these parks provide for us the best means of contributing something concrete to the knowledge of the State's birds.

An example of the work that can be accomplished in this manner is the survey that I made during the past (1947) spring. My area included Wyman Park and the campus of The Johns Hopkins University. This section is bounded by University Parkway, Twenty-ninth Street, Charles St., and the Md. and Pa. Railroad track. The major part of this territory is open grassy land with frequent large trees, though a small portion of the University land to the northwest of the campus is covered with underbrush. Two intersecting streams, partly through this underbrush, are a major attraction to the birds.

My records extended from March 15, the date of the arrival of the first robin on campus, until the end of the crest of the migration in May. During that short period I recorded 82 species of birds including, for example, 7 types of sparrows and 16 kinds of warblers. The most noticeable difference between this particular work and the migrations usually seen in the field was that the distinct "waves" of individual species were much more pronounced. For example, I recorded my first towhee on April 20; on the 22nd there were 8 present, and on the 23rd 15 were seen, but by the 27th none were to be found.

Perhaps the most spectacular and unusual records were provided by the thrushes. The first arrivals were 10 hermit thrushes late in March. Within about a month all five species had made their appearance. The gray-cheeked thrush, usually not plentiful, remained for about three weeks; during this period there were occasionally more than a dozen of them to be found in a few hundred square feet of underbrush. Throughout this time thrushes were unusually tame, even to the extent of a wood thrush investigating my shoes as a possible source of food.

Other migrants such as the rose-breasted grosbeak, scarlet tanager, and most of the warblers proved much less cooperative, and with some exception stayed in the tops of the trees. The range of possibilities of types that may be seen is indicated by the fact

that a solitary sandpiper remained for two weeks by a small pool in the woods back of the campus, and a covey of better than 12 quail stayed all through the winter and early spring.

While my notes ended with the last of the spring migrants, breeding bird censuses are not only desirable but very practicable. Here again, as was the case in the migratory flights, results are not so exciting as in the less frequented areas; but notwithstanding this, they concern sufficient numbers and species to provide more than enough work for the average individual. Though my work did not include a breeding census, I noticed that thrashers, blue jays, mockingbirds, towhees, wood thrushes, a red-headed woodpecker, and a red-eyed vireo appeared to be nesting, and a Louisiana water-thrush which stayed in the vicinity for several weeks gave hopes that that species might remain likewise.

The desirability of greater numbers of such locality surveys is emphasized by C. S. Robbins in his article "Do You Keep a Bird List?" (Md. Birdlife, 3:77) in which he suggests that lists be kept and turned in for any section that can be regularly observed.

I am certain that there are many others in this organization who are interested, as I am, in the census work of the Society but who for lack of time or transportation do not take part in the scheduled field trips, and it is to these that I suggest that the parks of Baltimore are an excellent place not only to improve field skill but also to contribute valuable information to the accumulating knowledge of the birds of our State.

Wm. B. Green

#### "THE WOOD THRUSH" for JANUARY-FEBRUARY

The Audubon Society of the District of Columbia has put its club magazine, The Wood Thrush, far beyond the usual quality of a local bird club publication. Offset-printed from beautifully prepared copy, rich with valuable articles by a number of accomplished ornithologists, and illustrated by photographs and attractive line drawings, it seems to us to have stepped into the class of a regional bird publication of the first order. Personally, I find it far more useful than Audubon Magazine and, in spite of its less expensive format, equally attractive. Much of its charm lies in the department headings and black-and-white illustrations by Editor Shirley Briggs.

The January-February issue has an excellent and informative article by John T. Nichols, on the use of decoys in attracting shorebirds for observation or photography. Our own Rob Stewart contributes a splendid article entitled "Birds of the Marshes", in which he discusses the bird species that inhabit marshes in our area, and presents a very scholarly discussion of the typical marsh plants and their relation to bird life.

A loan copy of the Wood Thrush is available from the secretary, or you may join the ASDC (\$2 year) and receive it regularly.

Orville Crowder

# THE SEASON

January - February 1949

The winter of 1948-49 was most exceptional in that it was characterized by mildness throughout. Ordinarily birds which are tricked into remaining north of their usual range by abnormally warm weather throughout the late autumn, suffer severely when the almost inevitable spell of frigid weather or snow and ice makes it impossible for them to find their customary food in sufficient quantity. It is a well-known fact that feeding stations enable stragglers to survive severe winter weather; but a great many of the half-hardy birds seen far from the nearest feeding station in mid- or late December, normally succumb to the rigors of winter in January or February. This time, however, the most severe weather came in late December and was of short duration. Both January and February rated among the warmest ever recorded, with an accumulated excess of 529° (9° per day) by the close of February at Washington, D.C. Coupled with this most extraordinary high average temperature was the complete absence of serious cold snaps or heavy snow falls. All these factors combined to produce one of the most unusual winters ever experienced in this region. Robins attracted the most attention by their wide-spread abundance; ruby-crowned kinglets were far commoner than previous records show for this season; numbers and variety of shorebirds were higher than ever before recorded (although few comparative figures are available except for recent years); three species were found wintering for the first time (little blue heron, pigeon hawk, and lesser yellow-legs); and several of our rarer wintering birds were present in larger numbers than usual. Still more excitement was interjected by the presence of such northern visitors as the American eider, glaucous gull, dovekie, and hoary redpoll (details to be published in The Auk), which appeared in spite of the mild weather.

Loons, Grebes, and Herons. Three field trips to Ocean City between Jan. 8 and Feb. 20 each reported 35 red-throated loons, the majority being found at the Ocean City inlet; a single bird at Mayo Beach on Jan. 2 (Stewart and Robbins) is of interest only because of the small number of winter records for this species in Chesapeake Bay. Pied-billed grebes started migrating early, the first being noted on Feb. 14 at Patuxent Refuge by F. M. Uhler. The first Maryland winter record of the little blue heron was established on Feb. 20 when the D.C. Audubon Society found an immature at W. Ocean City.

Ducks. Most of the usual species of waterfowl were at least as common as in the previous winter, and migration started early due to the very open winter. Interesting high counts included: 80 green-winged teal and 40 shovellers, Blackwater Refuge, Dec. 19 (I.R.Bar-



nes); 1,000 canvas-backs, Morgantown bridge, Jan. 16 (E.G.Baldwin); 1,075 redheads, Kent Is., Feb. 5 (Stewart and Springer); 330 American golden-eyes, lower Patuxent River, Feb. 5 (Leo Couch); and 6,880 ruddy ducks, southern Anne Arundel Co., Jan. 2 (Stewart, Robbins). An immature male American eider found by the Audubon Society, and later studied by many M.O.S. members at Ocean City inlet on Feb. 20, is the third record for Maryland. Especially early migrants at Patuxent Refuge included a ruddy duck on Jan. 27 (Stewart), 4 baldpate on Feb. 13 (Webster), and a green-winged teal on the 19th (Stewart). Crowder reported much smaller rafts of redheads wintering off Carroll Is. this year. His estimate of 2,000 ducks in that area on Feb. 13 was typical of this winter; populations the two previous winters ranged from 18,000 to 25,000 ducks, largely redheads and baldpate.

Hawks, Shorebirds. The first mid-winter record of the pigeon hawk was established on Feb. 12, when John B. May and Crowder watched one at close range for some time at Tilghmans; they repeatedly had good views of the back and tail, and then watched the pigeon hawk catch a small bird and dive into the woods to eat it. Black-bellied plover were seen regularly at Ocean City, with a maximum of 7 on Feb. 20. Wilson's snipe were again recorded wintering west of Chesapeake Bay; 1 was flushed at Patuxent Refuge on Jan. 14 (Robbins), and 2 on Feb. 16 (Mitchell and Springer). Two wintering individuals were seen at Blackwater on the Feb. 20 trip, as were 2 greater yellow-legs and 16 lesser yellow-legs. The latter is the first mid-winter record for Maryland. The best count of wintering red-backed sandpipers was 45 at Ocean City on Feb. 5 by Stewart and Springer. These observers also found 30 sanderlings on the same date and place. The first migrating woodcocks were heard at Patuxent Refuge on Jan. 25 (A.C.Martin), and Towson on Feb. 12 (Kolb).

Gulls, Dovekies. John B. May and Orville Crowder spotted what appears to be the first sight record of the glaucous gull for Maryland (since the observations listed by Hampe and Kolb pertain to the District of Columbia); they saw the bird at very close range, perched between herring gulls at the Tilghman Packing Company pier, Tilghman, on Feb. 12. It is interesting to note that more glaucous gulls than usual were found in New England this winter. Great black-backed gulls were seen several times at the Sandy Point ferry crossing; the highest count was obtained on the Feb. 19 M.O.S. trip when 4 adults and 1 immature were seen at Sandy Point and 1 immature at Matapeake. Bonaparte's gulls at Ocean City rose abruptly from 13 on Dec. 27 to 200 on Jan. 8, then dropped to small numbers in February. With only 2 previous dovebies on record from Maryland, Buckalew's report that commercial fishermen had seen thousands 10 to 15 miles off the Delaware, Maryland and Virginia coasts during the first part of January, and had caught hundreds of them in their mackerel nets, is of very special interest. The only dovebie seen from shore was at Ocean City on Jan. 8 (Stewart and C.G.Webster).

Doves, Swallows, Phoebe, Raven. The first cooing of mourning doves was noted on Feb. 26 at Towson (Kolb) and Feb. 27 at Woodside (J.H.Fales). N. Shelton and T. W. Donnelly found a phoebe at Seneca on Jan. 8. Stewart and Webster saw 12 tree swallows at Dames Quar-ter on Jan. 8, one of the few winter records for this species in

Maryland. John H. Fales had the rare good fortune of observing a raven at Woodside on Jan. 9 (see Wood Thrush 4: 158 for details).

Nuthatches, Wrens, Thrushes. Red-breasted nuthatches wintered in very small numbers through the coastal plain. Another wintering locality for the long-billed marsh wren was discovered by Leo Couch, who found one on the lower Patuxent River on Feb. 5. Although the hermit thrush was relatively scarce, the robin wintered in truly amazing numbers. A single flock at South Point, Worcester Co., contained an estimated 700 birds on Feb. 20. On Jan. 14, 157 were noted on the Patuxent mid-winter census, where the highest previous count had been 25, and the average of 8 years was 6; throughout the winter, flocks of 50 to 100 birds were seen daily. Baltimore and Chase observers also noted far more than usual. Mr. and Mrs. Herman Kuch first saw bluebirds enter nest holes at Pikesville on Feb. 16.

Kinglets, Pipits. Ruby-crowned kinglets smashed all records for winter abundance. The highest count of 23 was reported on the Jan. 14 Patuxent census; the previous high was 4. A glance at the Christmas Counts published in Audubon Field Notes (April 1949) shows unusually high numbers of ruby-crowns on nearly all Maryland counts. The 6 recorded at Chase deserve special mention. Mrs. Roberta Fletcher found this species at Denton throughout the winter, with a peak of 5 on Jan. 1. Pipits continued to be abundant on the Eastern Shore. The last at Patuxent Refuge was seen on Jan. 12 by Stewart.

Shrikes, Blackbirds. Only 2 migrant shrikes were reported: 1 at Port Tobacco on Jan. 3, and 1 at Berlin, Feb. 5. Red-wings, grackles, and cowbirds arrived at Patuxent Refuge on Feb. 16, and the first rusty blackbird on Feb. 25. Boat-tailed grackles probably arrived along the coast at about the same time, but since we have to depend on observers from other parts of the State to send in records from the Maryland coast, the boat-tail was not recorded until the following weekend; 43 were counted at West Ocean City and 10 at South Pt. on Feb. 20 by the D.C. Audubon Society and M. O. S. trips.

Finches and Sparrows. Haven Kolb noted the first singing of cardinals in Baltimore on Jan. 10, and Hampe detected the first migratory movement of this species at Halethorpe on Feb. 21, when new birds began to enter his banding traps. Mrs. Fletcher recorded her first towhee at Denton on Feb. 13, but since this is a full month ahead of the normal migration period it is likely that the bird wintered nearby. The first full song of the field sparrow was recorded at Beltsville on Feb. 23 (Fales). Another report of wintering white-crowns in the Piedmont was received from Jane Tuttrup, who wrote that 2 adults and 4 immatures were seen at an Olney feeding station on Feb. 9. Fox sparrows began to appear in mid-February; Mr. and Mrs. Kuch counted as many as 12 on Feb. 19 at Pikesville. Song sparrows sang occasionally throughout the winter at Laurel, but were heard regularly from Feb. 3 on (Eleanor Robbins); Kolb heard the first song in Baltimore on Feb. 8. Hervey Brackbill, who keeps daily watch for the return on his color-banded birds, found that the first of his 1948 song sparrows returned on Jan. 30, 1949.

C. S. Robbins

## CLUB EVENTS

MONTHLY MEETING, JANUARY 7. The new year got off to a fine start, as far as meeting programs are concerned, with Brooke Meanley's description of the bird life of the coastal plain. There is a contagious enthusiasm to Mr. Meanley's lectures which you must experience to appreciate. Two years ago, he got us all enthused over the upland plovers of Worthington Valley (which have since been the subject of an annual club pilgrimage), and this time he shared his close interest in the birds that live between the fall line and the tidewater. The Pocomoke Swamp received special attention, and the Swainson's warbler figured prominently in the discussion. This elusive bird, rather plentiful in the cane brakes further south, reaches its northern limit in the white alder habitat of the Pocomoke cypress swamp. We have heard it sing there on two club trips, but have not yet seen it. Mr. Meanley's experience with the bird farther south made good telling, and his slides aided the story materially.

HEAD-OF-THE-CHESAPEAKE FIELD TRIP, JANUARY 23. A detailed account of this trip by Miss Sandy will be found elsewhere in this issue.

VISIT TO A CROW ROOST, JANUARY 30. Col. Triplett, who led this trip in conjunction with Dr. Lutz, has written an account which will appear in the next Maryland Birdlife.

MONTHLY MEETING, FEBRUARY 4. Dr. David E. Davis, editor of The Wilson Bulletin and member of the staff of the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health, has been a member of the Society for several years, but it took a little time to induce him to present a meeting program. This one was well worth waiting for.

Under the interesting title, "The Communist Cuckoos", Dr. Davis described the curious territorialism of the four subfamilies of Crotophaginae, with particular attention to the ani, whose habits he studied for twelve months in Cuba. These anis disregard the customary monagamous pattern and also follow communal habits in incubating and feeding. Dr. Davis told us that the birds' knowledge of boundaries is intimate and definite, and that the boundaries are recognized by the flock, just as we know them to be recognized by individuals in other species.

The discussion was a scholarly one, and full of new information. We hope to have Dr. Davis on the program soon again.

KENT ISLAND FIELD TRIP, FEBRUARY 6. As time goes on, we seem to trend more and more toward annual "pilgrimages" to certain popular observing areas. Kent Island provides such a spot, fortunately

a very fine one, and this year marked our fourth annual visit. Under the leadership of Commander Berry and Mr. Ramsay, we spent a balmy spring-like day covering the island from end to end, turned up 48 species in all, and digressed a little at one point to look at the first spring flowers - chickweed and Whitlow grass. Among the interesting birds were red-throated loons, horned grebes, 600 swan, 300 canvasbacks, 600 coot, and more than 100 meadowlarks. The popularity of the island as a wintering spot was emphasized by the count of more than 50 towhees. At Sandy Point ferry terminal, before crossing to the island, we had close observations of two great black-backed gulls on the jetties.

WILDLIFE SCREEN TOUR #1 - FEBRUARY 11. Projection problems plagued the arrangements committee at this first of three paid-admission lectures, and the result was not good, to put it mildly. Dr. May is a fine speaker, and he has some excellent pictures. He rose to the occasion nobly, did what he could to overcome the out-of-focus, poorly lighted projection, and was very kind in sympathizing with us over our own troubles. We hope he will be able to come back another year, when conditions are closer to what we hope is normal.

BLACKWATER REFUGE AND OCEAN CITY, FEBRUARY 19-20. Ocean City seems to be a sure-fire bird paradise at any season of the year, and proved its dependability on this winter-time visit by providing a list of 107 species. Perhaps the leadership of Chan Robbins, ably assisted on this occasion by Rockwell Smith, has more than a little to do with this result. Among the birds present were 2 species of loons, 2 species of grebes, gannets, American brant, gadwalls, all three scoters, a red-breasted nuthatch and both horned larks. There were 19 species of ducks in all, the prize observation being that of the rarely seen American eider. Clapper and Virginia rails were heard, a snow bunting was observed on the sand flats at West Ocean City. Outstanding find of all, in this wonderful week-end, was a redpoll, subsequently collected and since then the subject of much discussion as to its subspecies.

There was much friendly competition with the contemporary field trip of the Audubon Society of the District of Columbia, and Ocean City residents were subjected to another lesson in the behavior of bird observers, who have a way of taking the town over completely these days.

DICKEYVILLE & LEAKIN PARK, FEBRUARY 26. The Newell sisters, who are growing up at a rate that makes us fear to report that they are still junior members, took over the leadership of this trip in Mr. Woodman's absence, and discharged the duty admirably. Twenty observers studied 19 winter species of birds, none of which were unusual, but all of which combined to make a very pleasant late-winter walk.



# "HEAD OF CHESAPEAKE" TRIP - JANUARY 23

The first ornithological field trip after the annual Christmas count was well attended. Twenty-one persons had sufficient enthusiasm to meet at 7 A.M. on January 23rd to participate in a circuit of the upper Chesapeake and a number of its tributaries. The temperature was rather frosty, and the sunrise observed on Pulaski Highway seemed hopeful for sunshine. Still, birding isn't entirely dependent upon the sun, so, when showers appeared around noon, we didn't allow them to dampen our interest and fervor. Moreover, we were particularly interested in waterfowl on this occasion.

Our first stop was at Otter Creek where we found a few pintails and mergansers. The first birds seen at Perry Point were several horned larks. The duck rafts, however, were somewhat disappointing. We did see a flock of 75 or 80 canvasbacks, a few scattered merganser, black, ruddy, mallard, scaup and ring-necked ducks. Swans and geese were seen in the distance. While we were scanning the water, two bald eagles came into focus, flying low.

Carpenter Point and vicinity presented swans and geese again in the distance. Closer in, ring-necked, redhead, golden-eye and merganser ducks were noted, but not in particularly large numbers of either type. The land birds observed in this region were about 8 or 10 tree sparrows, and a fish crow was audible.

On our way to Chesapeake City and Cecilton several marsh, red-shouldered, red-tailed and sparrow hawks were seen; also a flock of about 50 cowbirds. Beyond Cecilton, at Rich Neck Farm on the Sassafras River, numerous swans and geese were noted on the opposite, or south, shore line. Turner's Creek, a part of this west shore line, was filled with black ducks, and scattered on the Sassafras were ring-necked, golden-eye, merganser and mallard ducks. The land birds in this area were cardinals, juncos, red-wings and grackles. Much to our surprise, a nearby garden disclosed a lovely clump of purple crocus, and winter jasmine was in flower running up the brick wall.

In the drive toward Chestertown several American rough-legged hawks were identified. The marsh waters outside Centreville revealed several horned grebes and baldpates, also gulls. It was now about 5 P.M., the drizzle and fog began to close in, so we headed for Sandy Point Ferry, reaching town about 7 P.M., having covered 185 miles.

We can truly say that the day was most interesting and worthwhile. No jaunt in the open is dull or useless, no matter what the weather may be. Everyone had a good appetite, and there was much fun and enjoyment.

(Miss) T. M. Sandy



C O N S T I T U T I O N -- Maryland Ornithological Society  
(Adopted at Annual Meeting, Catocotin, May 14, 1949)

Article I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be "Maryland Ornithological Society".

Article II. OBJECTS

- Section 1. The object of this Society shall be to record the observations of bird life in Maryland; to disseminate in a popular manner the results of such observations; to collate the scientific data furnished by bird students throughout the state; to supply such information to other groups as requested; to publish and distribute at established times the official publication of the organization; to provide opportunities for increased knowledge of bird life; and to promote the cultivation of public sentiment in the preservation of our native wild life.
- Section 2. This organization shall operate without profit and no part of its income shall inure to the benefit of any individual member.

Article III. MEMBERSHIP

- Section 1. The membership of the Society shall be of three classes: Sustaining, Regular and Junior.
- Section 2. The dues of sustaining members shall be \$5 a year; Regular Members, \$1 a year; Junior Members, 50¢ a year.
- Section 3. Junior membership shall be limited to persons under 18 years of age, who shall not be entitled to vote at meetings of the Society.
- Section 4. Junior bird clubs may affiliate with the Society by taking out a single Junior membership for the group.
- Section 5. The annual term of membership shall be from July 1 to June 30. Dues received from members who join after April 1 shall be considered as paid for the following membership year. Members whose dues remain unpaid on December 1 shall be dropped from the roll.
- Section 6. Dues of affiliated members shall be collected by the treasurer of the local unit and responsibility for payment shall be that of the local unit; dues of unaffiliated members shall be billed by the treasurer of the Society and submitted direct to him.

Article IV. LOCAL UNITS

- Section 1. A Local Unit of the Society may be organized by not less than six members of the Society in any area.
- Section 2. Such units may adopt by-laws and administer their own affairs, provided such action is not in conflict with this Constitution.
- Section 3. Local units may choose any form of name, and may raise and administer funds above and beyond the dues and funds of the Society.
- Section 4. Members of the Society within such areas may elect to remain direct members of the Society.

Article V. OFFICERS

- Section 1. The officers of the Society shall be a President, one or more Vice Presidents, a Secretary and a Treasurer. The offices of Secretary and Treasurer may be combined at the discretion of the Executive Committee.
- Section 2. The duties of these officers shall be those usually pertaining to their offices. In addition, the President shall be ex-officio member of the governing committee of each Local Unit.

- Section 3. The President, Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected at the annual meeting, shall assume their duties at the end of the meeting, and shall hold office for a term of one year or until their successors are elected.
- Section 4. The president of each Local Unit shall be a Vice President of the Society, and shall be elected in accordance with the by-laws of the Local Unit. The order of succession of vice presidents shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

#### Article VI. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Section 1. The above officers, together with one representative from each Local Unit, shall constitute the Executive Committee.
- Section 2. The representative of each Local Unit shall be selected in accordance with the by-laws of the unit, and shall hold office until a successor is selected and certified to the Secretary of the Society.
- Section 3. The Executive Committee shall have general charge of the affairs and funds of the Society. It shall be its duty to fill all vacancies among the officers, and to devise and adopt such measures as shall advance the interests of the Society.
- Section 4. The Executive Committee shall meet upon call of the President, or of any four members thereof, upon due notice to all its members, and shall meet at least once a year. At other times its duties may be discharged by mail, provided all members of the Committee have an opportunity to vote on matters so presented.
- Section 5. Five members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum.

#### Article VII. COMMITTEES

- Section 1. The Executive Committee shall make provision for Standing Committees.
- Section 2. Special Committees shall be appointed by the President as required.
- Section 3. The President shall be empowered to appoint Chairmen of all committees.

#### Article VIII. MEETINGS

- Section 1. A regular meeting of the Society shall be held during the months of May or June each year, and shall be designated as the Annual Meeting.
- Section 2. Special meetings may be called by the President on approval of the Executive Committee.
- Section 3. The time and place of all meetings shall be designated by the Executive Committee.
- Section 4. Fifteen members, not more than five of whom represent any one Unit, shall constitute a quorum.

#### Article IX. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

The deliberations of all Society and Executive Committee meetings shall be governed by Roberts' "Rules of Order".

#### Article X. AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended at any regular stated meeting by a two-thirds vote of the members present, after the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing to the Society membership at least thirty days prior to voting.

-- END OF CONSTITUTION --